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Canada in Flower

Commonwealth and Citizenship Day May 17/1968

Teacher's Notes

The provincial and territorial floral emblems may provide the impetus for studies in a variety of school subjects, preferably in the creation of units which cut across the traditional subject boundaries; the students' projects can culminate in a program or ceremony on Friday, May 17. The suggestions which follow are intended to be helpful in the achievement of this objective.

Suggested Activities

ART

In correlation with the floral emblems, art might take many forms, including one or more of the following:

1) Such techniques as silk screen printing, linoleum cut printing, or stencilling might be used in textile designs with flower motifs.
2) The flowers may be used as a background for suitable motifs in pottery-making.
3) Flowers may be drawn or painted to inspire a personal composition.
4) Low-relief sculpture may be undertaken using such woods as pine or cedar.

ENGLISH

Teachers might wish to develop one or more of the following creative writing or appreciation activities:

1) References to the floral emblems or to other Canadian wild flowers abound in both prose and poetry. Students could locate some of these for inclusion in writing scrapbooks.

The Prairie Crocus

a) "When the gleaming prairie sun comes out,
apparently to stay, those magnificent clichés,
the meadow lark and the crocus, again offer
their yearly paean of melody and fragrance."
Ralph Allen, "The Land of Eternal Change", in Maclean's *Canada, Portrait of a Country,* McClelland & Stewart, 1960.

b) ". . . the pulsing prairie-run.
Where the plowshare tears implacably at the
tangled roots of life
And the mould-board hides away
Bunch-grass and crocus-bloom."
Arthur Stringer, "The Sod-Breaker", in *Open Water,* Little, Brown & Company, Limited. Boston.

2) Using prose or poetry, students might describe their own experience in finding a favourite wild flower or a rare one.
3) Legends or myths about wild flowers might be found, or, better still, invented. Books of Indian legends would prove helpful for this purpose. The bibliography supplies references for this project.
4) Students might take photographs of wild flowers and write their own captions.

SCIENCE

Pictures of the provincial and territorial floral emblems in their natural settings provide a starting point for ecological studies and field trips. Students might visit a stump, a marsh, or a rocky place to find the families of flowers indigenous to each type of environment. Moving still farther afield, the various environments in Canada might be compared with those of other Commonwealth countries and investigations made to discover the differing forms of vegetation. Flowers of the Commonwealth might be purchased in seed or plant form and grown in the classroom. Students might look for the plants depicted in this portfolio and do detailed sketches or photographs of them. It is possible that questions will arise about alternate flowers which might have been adopted.

Units on conservation lead naturally from this material. Students will be able to find examples of both good and bad conservation practice in their own region. Newspaper clippings of topical problems on erosion and pollution of air and water might be collected.

SOCIAL SCIENCES

Students could compare the scenes which the artist has chosen with the scenes on the back of Canadian currency or with other pictures, using such criteria as the selection of locale within the various provinces or the accuracy of

detail. Careful observation of the pictures might cause students to arrive at certain conclusions about Canada: the lack of evidence of humans in the Northwest Territories, the Nova Scotia fishing village, the grain elevators of Saskatchewan. Research could be done concerning the architectural styles, the terrain, or the vegetation in the pictures. These activities should lead to discussions about whether the artist has selected truly representative scenes, or simply perpetuated existing stereotypes.

Several of the flowers are indigenous to more than one part of Canada. Maps could be drawn to show the locale of each of the flowers.

A broad range of Social Science activities in connection with the study of Commonwealth countries, including participation in Operation School-to-School, is a natural outcome of emphasis upon Commonwealth and Citizenship Day. Some students will be prepared to deal critically with current events items, and to engage in debates on such sophisticated questions as: "If loyalty to Canada grows, does loyalty to the Commonwealth of Nations diminish?"

Acknowledgements

McClelland & Stewart, Limited, for permission to reprint an extract from "The Land of Eternal Change" by Ralph Allen.

Little, Brown (Canada), Limited, for permission to reprint an extract from "The Sod-Breaker" by Arthur Stringer.

National Trust Company, Limited, for permission to use their printer's plates for the provincial and territorial floral emblems.

Visual Aids

The following filmstrips and slide sets may be purchased from:

THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD
1 Lombard Street, Toronto 1, Ontario

FILMSTRIPS

Series (5) Common Canadian Wild Flowers — Eastern Canada

Series (5) Common Canadian Wild Flowers — Western Canada

SLIDES

Set No. 6100 — Common Wild Flowers
24100 — Garden Flowers — Pt. 1
24200 — Garden Flowers — Pt. 2

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Canada in Flower

Newfoundland/PITCHER PLANT/This colourful plant of bogs and marshes has rosettes of curiously shaped hollow leaves which collect rainwater and act as living traps for insects whose drowned bodies provide nourishment as they decompose. Queen Victoria selected the Pitcher Plant as the emblem to be engraved on the Newfoundland penny minted in 1864. It was officially adopted by the province in 1954.

Prince Edward Island/STEMLESS LADY'S-SLIPPER/This lady's-slipper is a member of the Orchid family and

grows wild across Canada from Newfoundland to Northern Alberta. Also known as Moccasin Flower, its delicate rosy-pink blooms may be found in dry pine woods or in sphagnum hummocks of spruce-larch bogs. It was designated as the official emblem of Prince Edward Island in March, 1965.

Nova Scotia/MAYFLOWER/Reflecting its scientific name which means 'creeping upon the earth', this plant is a prostrate vine with slender woody stems and evergreen leaves. Clusters of small pink spicy-fragrant flowers, borne at the ends of the branches, open in late April or May. It was used as an emblem on coins and stamps before Confederation and officially adopted in 1901.

New Brunswick/PURPLE VIOLET/Although the scientific name was not designated when the purple violet was adopted in 1936, it is assumed to be *Viola cucullata,* one of several blue-purple violets blooming from late April through May and June in moist woods, meadows, and roadsides from Newfoundland to Ontario. It was suggested by the school children and the Women's Institutes of the province.

Quebec/GARDEN LILY/A native of the northwest coast of the Mediterranean, this stately white lily is an old garden favourite. In Quebec it is the lily of artistic tradition and religious imagery, not to be confused with the heraldic fleur-de-lis which is based on an iris. The Quebec Legislative Assembly adopted the lily in 1963, replacing the native wild iris.

Ontario/WHITE TRILLIUM/The Trillium is native to the hardwood forests of Ontario and southern Quebec, blooming from late April to mid-June. Each flower arises from a whorl of three broad leaves and has three green sepals and three waxy white petals which turn pink as they begin to wither. It was adopted in 1937 on recommendation by the Ontario Horticultural Society.

Manitoba/PRAIRIE CROCUS/A true harbinger of spring, this delicate wind-blown wild flower with its yellow-centred lavender blooms, appears in April or May, often before the snow of winter has melted. In seed, the plumed styles of the raised fruiting heads scatter the light, creating a hazy 'prairie smoke'. It was chosen by the school children of Manitoba and adopted in 1906.

Saskatchewan/PRAIRIE LILY/This handsome variant of the eastern Wood Lily is native to the plains and prairies. In June and July it produces clusters of erect reddish-orange to dark red flowers and where abundant it covers the ground bright red. It was selected by the Saskatchewan Natural History Society and adopted in 1941. Conservation will be needed to ensure its preservation.

Alberta/WILD ROSE/This rose is a shrub two to three feet in height which is widely distributed across Canada. Its fragrant pale to deep pink flowers brighten the fields and border the roadsides and railways and are replaced later by scarlet hips which attract birds in fall and winter. It was chosen by the school children of Alberta and adopted in 1930.

British Columbia/PACIFIC DOGWOOD/This beautiful tree of southern British Columbia blooms profusely in April and May before its leaves have fully developed. Its large showy blossoms have four to six white petal-like leaves. In fall clusters of bright red berry-like fruits resembling beads add to the brilliant hues of the foliage. It was adopted in 1956 and is protected by law.

Northwest Territories/MOUNTAIN AVENS/This charming plant occurs throughout the central and eastern Canadian Arctic and northward to the limit of land. A prostrate shrub with narrow inrolled evergreen leaves, it bears dainty pale yellow to cream-coloured flowers in June and July. Frequently it forms extensive mats which cover vast areas in the tundra and on mountain slopes. It was adopted in 1957.

Yukon/FIREWEED/Fireweed grows to a height of four feet or more with steeple-like clusters of pink flowers which come into bloom throughout the summer. Its tiny hairy-tufted seeds are windborne great distances and invade open ground and recent burns, resulting in acres of colour on mountain slopes and along the highways of the north. It was adopted in 1957.

The Minister's Message

During Canada's Centennial Year, there was an encouraging revitalization of interest in Canada, along with a resurgence of pride in citizenship in this great country. This year, it is my hope that we can build upon this national devotion by extending our thinking to Canada's place within the world community and, more particularly, her membership in the Commonwealth of Nations.

Once again the Ontario Department of Education is providing teaching aids to assist teachers and students to mark Commonwealth and Citizenship Day in appropriate ways. Even more important than special ceremonies marking this important occasion on May 17 will be the implementation of suitable topics in the school program in the weeks preceding that date. Examination of pictures of the provincial and territorial floral emblems in their natural settings should suggest activities in the fields of History, Geography, Science, Music, Art, and English. Conservation themes come quickly to mind. Field study trips may be undertaken to give the necessary first-hand experience.

In utilizing the pictures, teachers must be careful to give students the opportunity to appreciate the aesthetic quality of these beautiful flowers and, through this medium, the encouragement to acquaint themselves with the beauty, the grandeur, the heritage of Canada.

I find it encouraging to know that school children played a very important part in the selection of several of the existing provincial floral emblems.

The study of the floral emblems of Canada leads naturally to research on the national flowers of other Commonwealth countries and meaningful learning situations may be developed around the climatic and other environmental conditions which would make such vegetation indigenous to a particular nation.

The Commonwealth of Nations is neither an empire nor a power bloc. It *is* a family of countries, the very survival of which depends upon the maintenance and strengthening of the ties that bind one member to another. This strengthening process can best be achieved by a continued effort to keep the citizens of each member country informed about the unique and the shared features of their own and their sister countries.

William G. Davis

WILLIAM G. DAVIS *Minister of Education.*

Newfoundland

Pitcher Plant / *Sarracenia purpurea*

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Prince Edward Island

Stemless Lady's-Slipper / *Cypripedium acaule*

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Nova Scotia

Mayflower / *Epigaea repens*

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New Brunswick

Purple Violet / *Viola cucullata*

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Quebec

Garden Lily / *Lilium candidum*

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White Trillium / *Trillium grandiflorum*

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Manitoba

Prairie Crocus / *Pulsatilla ludoviciana*

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Saskatchewan

Prairie Lily / *Lilium philadelphicum*

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Alberta

Wild Rose / *Rosa acicularis*

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British Columbia

Pacific Dogwood / *Cornus nuttallii*

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Northwest Territories

Mountain Avens / *Dryas integrifolia*

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Yukon Territory

Fireweed / *Epilobium angustifolium*

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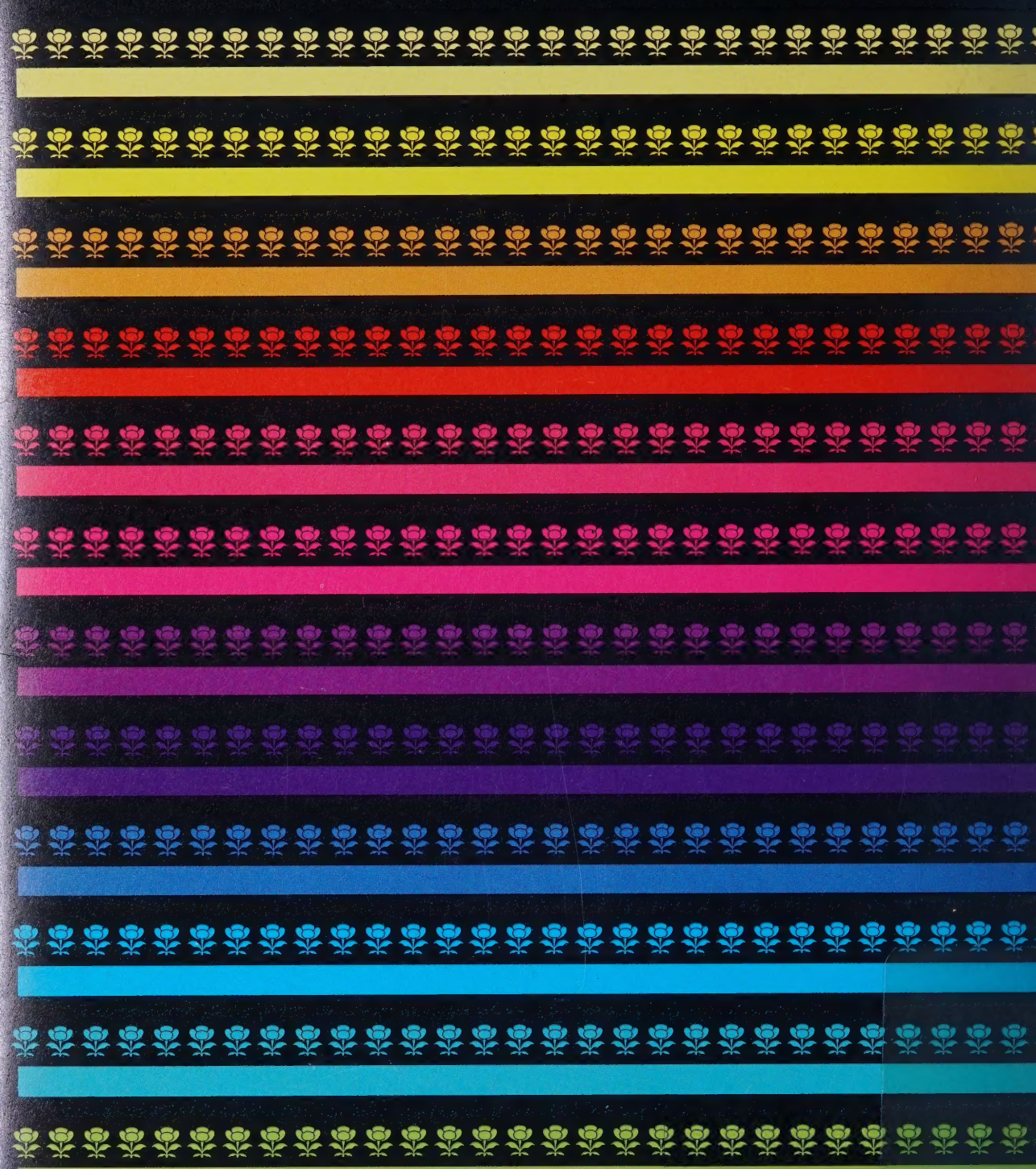

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